



THE STORK FAMILY.

In many lands the stork family is held in high honour. In many parts of the European continent they are encouraged to build their nests on the chimneys, steeples, and trees near dwellings. Indeed, as an inducement to them to pitch their quarters on the houses, boxes are sometimes erected on the roofs, and happy is the household which thus secures the patronage of a stork. In Morocco and in Eastern countries also storks are looked upon as sacred birds, and with good reasons, for they render very useful service both as scavengers and as slayers of snakes and other reptiles. In most of the towns a stork's hospital will be found. It consists of an enclosure to which are sent all birds that have been injured. They are kept in this infirmary—which is generally supported by voluntary contributions—until they regained health and strength. To kill a stork is regarded as an offence.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF ACTS.

A. D. 46.] LESSON VIII. [Nov. 20.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY SERMON.

Acts 13. 26-43.] [Memory verse, 38.

GOLDEN TEXT.

To you is the word of this salvation sent.—Acts 13. 26.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The promises and prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled in Christ Jesus.

CIRCUMSTANCES.

Paul and Barnabas, without tarrying at Perga, where they lauded from Cyprus, went inland to the north, till they came to the large city of Antioch, a very different city from that from which they started on this journey. Here on the Sabbath they went to the Jewish synagogue, and were invited to speak. Paul began by rehearsing some of the early history of the Jews. He would show them how the Scriptures were fulfilled in Jesus.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

This Salvation—In Jesus. (Verses 26-28.) *They knew him not*—They did not recognize him as the Messiah. So Jesus said: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." *Fulfilled them*—Such prophecies as Isa. 53; Zech. 13. 7. Only a crucified Redeemer making atonement for sin could be the true Messiah. But that alone was not enough. He

must be alive, a living Saviour. Hence Paul dwells so much on his resurrection. *Second part*—Verse 7. *Thou art my son*—God was the Father of Jesus, and recognized him as his Son on several occasions. Luke 1. 35; Matt. 3. 17, 17. 5. *He said*—See Isa. 53. 3. *I will give you the sure mercies of David*. Namely, the promise (2 Sam. 7. 13, 16), that David's throne should be established for ever in his descendants. *Thou shalt not suffer*, etc. Psa. 10. 10.—Paul's argument is that this promise could not apply to David personally, for it was not true of him, but to his Son, of whom it was true. *Justified*—Treated as if just, as if he had never sinned. *Be ware*—Probably Paul saw some signs of dissipation in his audience. *In the prophets*. The book of the prophets. These words are from Hab. 1. 5. But the reference is to the efforts of the prophets to keep the kingdom from being destroyed, but in vain. *When the Jews*—This should read: "When they," the apostles. Omit the word "Gentiles." As the apostles were leaving the meeting, various persons asked them to come again.

Find in this lesson—

1. A wrong way of reading the Bible.
2. Two things by which Christ becomes our Saviour.
3. Some blessings to which we are invited.
4. A warning.

REVIEW EXERCISE.

1. To what place did Paul go next? "To Antioch, the capital of Pisidia." 2. What did he do there? "He preached on the Sabbath in the Jewish synagogue." 3. What did he preach? "That Jesus is the Saviour of all who believe." 4. How did he prove it to them? "By their own Scriptures." 5. What did he entreat them to do? "To take warning from the past history of their people."

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

Repeat III. and IV. of the Ten Commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.

ONE OF GOD'S PICTURES.

"FATHER, what is the definition of artist?" said Fred Inglesant, looking up suddenly from his book.

"In what particular sense is it to be applied?" was the questioning reply.

"Painting," said Fred.

"The simplest definition, I think, would be. One who produces a pleasing and natural effect in the harmony of colour, skilful grouping, and correct outline of his scenes or forms. He who comes nearest to nature is a true artist. It requires a keen eye, a ready touch, and a soul alive to all that is good and beautiful, to reproduce the work of the greatest artist the world has ever known or ever will know."

"Do you mean Michael Angelo or Raphael?" asked Fred.

"No, neither of these; if you walk out with me, I will show you one of his pictures."

As none of their friends had handsome paintings, Fred was surprised, and his surprise increased as they neared the river. His father stopped. "What do you see?" he asked.

"The river dotted with sails," Fred said, looking questioningly at his father.

"Yes, a clear, flowing stream widening

out until it is touched by the heavenly azure of the sky, over which float opal clouds, with here and there breaking through them floods of golden light; all this reflected in the mirror below, as are the white sails gliding so smoothly over it."

"O, now I see the picture you promised me, father!" exclaimed Fred, catching some of his father's inspiration. "See how it is framed in by those trees, which seem to form an arch over this end of it, and the rocks on this side, and all the tangle of wild flowers and vines. Even this old log helps to make it more perfect, doesn't it?"

His father smiled. "I need not tell you who is the greatest artist now, I see," he said. "The best critic can find no fault with his work."

Tommy's School.

"GEOGRAPHY'S a nuisance, and arithmetic's a bore,"

Said Tommy, with a frown upon his face. "I hate the sight of grammars, and my Latin makes me roar;

It's always sure to get me in disgrace. When I'm a man," he added, as he threw his school books down,

"I'll have a school that boys will think is fine!

They need not know an adjective or adverb from a noun.

Nor whether Caesar bridged the Po or Rhine.

"I don't care if they think that George the third was King of Spain, When these old fogies lived so long ago. Or if they all should answer that the Volga is in Maine,

What difference would it make, I'd like to know?

But instead of useless things I'll teach 'em how to coast and skate;

They all shall learn to row and sail a boat, And how to fire a pistol, and to shoot a rifle straight,

And how to swim, and how to dive and float.

"We'll play at tennis, and at cricket all the live-long day;

And then there's polo, and—Oh, yes, foot ball;

And base ball they shall every single one learn how to play,

For that's the most important thing of all. I tell you," finished Thomas, "I'll have one of just that kind;

Then all the boys, you see, will want to go. They will not run away and say my school's an 'awful grind,"

Or call the lessons dull and hard, I know."

THE BEAUTY THAT LASTS.

BEAUTY is called a dangerous gift, not because it is not good to be beautiful, but because the girl who is pretty is almost certain to think that her beauty is all-sufficient. With it she imagines she can conquer her kingdom. She does not consider that beauty may fade. It is something as difficult for her to realize as death itself is to the young; it is far off, vague, all but impossible.

How is she ever going to look other than she does now, and still be herself? And, at any rate, there are always the means to make the repairs of beauty, and sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

And so, in an average of more than half the instances, she goes dancing off about her pleasure like a fly in the sun, as full of the present, as careless of the future. She makes no preparation for the impending fate which is sure to come to her if she lives long enough. She relies on her fair face, her blushes, her dimples, her radiance, her smiles, her glances, her sweetness.

To please and attract is the aim of her life, and it does not need the cultivation of the sterner virtues for that. The pretty girl ignores intellectual cultivation.

Who cares for syllogisms, lectures, instructions? she unconsciously argues, from rosy lips. Who will stop to ask if the bright eyes have dulled themselves over dry pages of scholastic lore? Let who will be learned; it is enough for her to be gay and happy. What, then, has our pretty creature left for the dim passage of middle age, when beauty has fallen away, but there still is left the desire to hold captive what once beauty gained?

The time is coming when there will be

deep crescents around the mouth, whose lovely curves have all been dragged down by flaccid muscles; when there will be spider-web lines about the eyes; when there will be hollows in the cheeks; when the red and white of the skin will have become blurred and mottled, or overlaid with yellow sallowness.

Let the pretty girl remember that in the darkness of that middle passage the beauty that she had before she entered it will not signify, all the faces are in the darkness together then, the girl that was plain with the girl that was beautiful. The wreck of beauty signifies then no more than the wreck of what never was beauty.

It is the sweet voice, the kindly manner, the burden of what is said, the tender-heartedness of what is done, that talk with any effect then.

It will not be long before she arrives at this time, which, in comparison to the blaze of youth, neighbours close on the dark, and she will need then all with which she can have filled her intellect and fed her soul, all that wit and virtue and breeding can have given her, in order to retain any thing of that kingdom to which in the early days she felt herself born by right divine.—Sidney, in *Golden Days*.

BURNING PAPER HOUSES IN CHINA.

The Chinese believe that if they burn paper money, paper houses, and other things that represent something that is useful to people in this world, the spirit of their departed friends can use them in the other world.

The house contains chairs and tables, and effigies of men and women servants, and clothes, and shoes, and trunks full of paper money, and cooking utensils.

While the house was burning, one of the priests sprinkled on the fire the blood of a cock, believing that by so doing the house would in some way be transformed into a spirit-land habitation for the departed one, and that its contents could also be used. The preparing and burning of these things were evidences of their love.

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